



Press Release

Lake County Sheriff's Office
www.sheriffdunlap.org

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PRESS RELEASE

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Phone and Computer Scam Alerts

Imagine you answer the phone and you are immediately connected to a police officer from the Bahamas Islands who explains that your grand-daughter is jail for a minor traffic violation, but since she is a not a resident she cannot be released until she pays the \$1,000 bail fee. The officer tells you that you need to go to Western Union and wire the money to him so she can be released. He then explains as soon as the Judge clears her case the money will be returned to you, probably in 2-3 days.

This is just one of the many scams being perpetrated against grandparents today. Often the caller will explain that they are their grandson or granddaughter themselves, only very hoarse from a cold but in jail. They will explain they need bail money, \$300-\$400, to get out of a very scary jail, but beg not to let their parents know so they will not get into any more trouble.

These are scams that citizens need to be aware of today, especially grandparents, whose heart strings can be pulled and who often have money available to help out. Sums asked for vary in amounts from a couple hundred dollars, all the way up to thousands. Many times the calls and transactions will take place over several days, beginning with bail bond and then moving to cover court fees and plane tickets home to "safety". Sometimes the caller even claims to be from a US Embassy.

Never, ever send these individuals money. Even though the callers may claim to be a grandchild in desperate straits and pleading not to tell their parents, you should immediately contact their parents. 99% of the time you will find your grandchild is safe and at college, or even at home.

Other scams include receiving an email from Nigeria or other foreign country where the writer explains they have won millions of dollars. They explain

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if you will give them your bank account information they will wire the money to you, than come to the United States to get their winnings, and pay you thousands for helping them with the transfer. Or, many use the scam of explaining to you that your computer has a virus and if you give them your credit card information they will deduct a small fee and fix your problem.

In short the scams are numerous. Yet they all have one thing in common, they are perpetrated by criminals from around the world trying to steal your savings by preying on your fears or heart strings.

We have included to three (3) websites you can go to that help identifying these scams. And every site makes the same recommendation, NEVER give your personal identification, bank account information, or credit information to anyone whose identity you are not absolutely sure of. Triple verify to make sure no person steals your money, identity, or your savings. Once the scam takes place, and you give up your information or your money, it is almost impossible to get it back, no matter how many police reports you file. Protect yourself and guard against it by never letting it take place.

Although many people are well aware of these today, there are still many who are not, and who are victimized hundreds of times each day. Let your family members know, let your friends know, and together we can stop this new wave of criminality.

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/financial_scams/financial_scams_5608.html

<http://www.ic3.gov/media/2013/130107.aspx>

<http://www.ic3.gov/media/2012.aspx>